

MINUTES AND REPORT

OF

MEETING COUNCIL

OF

THE COOPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

held at 369 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne on Sunday, 8th June 1980 commencing 2.45 p.m.

1. PRESENT:

Mr. M. Rundle
Mr. J. N. Black
Mr. A. Dash
Mr. E. J. Long
Mr. B. H. Macintosh
Mr. O. J. Slattery
Mr. W. W. Rawlinson

President

Executive Officer

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Messrs. K. D. Currey, N. Harvey and J. Rigby.

2. MINUTES:

Minutes of meetings held

18th February 1980
31st March 1980
21st April 1980

having been circulated were confirmed and adopted as correct records; all recommendations and decisions contained therein were ratified.

3. MATTERS ARISING - April meeting

3.i Victorian Employment Committee - Minute 4.ii

A deputation of Messrs. Rundle, Long and Rawlinson met with the Minister of Labour & Industry on 23rd April 1980. Present at the meeting was also the Director of the Victorian Employment Committee and the Chairman of the Victorian Small Business Development Corporation. The Chairman indicated the meeting to have been successful and the submission made on behalf of the Federation was favourably received for action by the Victorian Government.

3.ii Cooperation in Schools

The Executive Officer reported having had a meeting with Dr. Chapman, Director of Planning Services Department of Education on 6th May 1980. Subsequently the subject of Cooperatives in Schools was discussed at a meeting of the Country Education Project Committee which operates in five rural areas of Victoria where locally elected committees conduct projects aimed at overcoming educational disadvantages. Two of these area committees have expressed interest in forming cooperatives. Further follow-up action is anticipated.

Council directed

that the Executive Officer communicate with Community Advancement Cooperatives in secondary schools currently operating with guarantees under the Cooperation Act as an exercise in exposure of the activities of the Cooperative Federation of Victoria and promotion of the concept of Cooperatives in schools.

Council also directed

the Executive Officer continue to associate with the pilot school cooperative project at Marcellin College and to report on the potential for financial viability of such student cooperatives.

4.

CORRESPONDENCE:

4.i

From Director, Victorian Employment Committee

Advising the next meeting of the Small Business and Cooperatives Committee likely to be in September after completion of the production of a Small Business and Cooperative booklet by Mr. David Griffiths. Mr. Rawlinson advised Council that he had been consulted and had lengthy discussions with Mr. Griffiths on possible material for inclusion in the booklet.

4.ii

From Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia advising of the programme concerned with accounting and audit requirements of Cooperatives to be held on Tuesday, 17th June 1980.

Mr. Rawlinson has nominated to attend this course.

4.iii

From Cooperative Federation of Australia re Council of Small Business Organisations of Australia submission to the Federal Government in the pre-Budget consultations.

4.iv

From Cooperative Federation of Australia concerning the Australian Federation of Consumer Organisations submission to the Federal Government as part of its pre-Budget consultations.

4.v

From Cooperative Federation of Australia re consumer supplies available from India.

4.vi

From Cooperative Federation of Australia and The Director, International Cooperative Alliance advising of the 58th International Cooperative Day to be held on the first Saturday in July 1980.

4.vii

From Cooperative Federation of Australia advising change in Western Australian membership of the Federal Council. Mr. A. T. Poustie, Assistant General Manager, Cooperative Bulk Handling in that State has been appointed to the Council to succeed Mr. R. G. Sutherland.

4.viii Report of the Trade Practices Consultative Committee on "Small Business and The Trade Practices' Act"

Council noted in Chapter I paragraph 5, definition of "Small Business" is inadequate to include Cooperatives as small businesses. Council directed

the attention of the Consultative Committee be drawn to this error.

5. APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Applications for membership of the Federation were received from:

Jojoba Cooperative Society Limited
Murrabit Advancement Cooperative Limited

both incorporated under the Cooperation Act as Producer Societies.

Both applications were supported by copies of their Rules, duly completed application forms and relevant entry fees.

Council

welcomed both these applicants into membership and agreed the fee will represent subscription to 30th June 1981.

6. FINANCE:

6.i A statement of income and expenditure from 1st July 1979 to 31st May 1980 and estimated balance sheet as at 31st May 1980 was submitted to the meeting, discussed and received.

6.ii A proposed Income and Expenditure budget for the Federation for the period 1st July 1980 to 30th June 1981 was submitted to the meeting and

approved subject to the continuance of the Joint Secretariat arrangements with The Cooperative Federation of Australia.

In addition, Council agreed

to allocate up to \$5,000 for promotion of one fee for service operation within the Federation. It is considered this service should be a central financial service; feasibility study should be undertaken to ensure the project will be viable. Council agreed to invite Mr. Les Robinson of New South Wales to undertake the initial feasibility study.

6.iii Council authorised

the purchase of office furniture up to a total of \$450 for utilisation in the new office location of the Federation's Secretariat.

7. LEGISLATION:

7.i The Registry advises that the amendments to the Cooperation Act agreed by Council at its February 1980 meeting are now likely to reach the Bill stage for the Spring 1980 session in Parliament.

7.ii The President reported having written to the Minister administering the Cooperation Act expressing concern at proposed amendments to the Stamps Act which would adversely affect Cooperative Credit Societies and Permanent Building Societies. The proposed amendments have been introduced into Parliament without consultation with the Federation or other involved Cooperative organisations.

The President also tabled a submission by the Victorian Credit Cooperative Association made to the Minister on the same subject. The offending clause was subsequently withdrawn from the Bill but indications are that it could be re-introduced in a later session of the present Parliament.

Council directed

the Legislative Committee to prepare a paper for receipt at its meeting seeking continuance of the full exemption for all Cooperatives under the Stamps Act and also to prepare alternative proposals to protect Trading and Producer Cooperatives in continuing to receive the benefits of these exemptions.

8. REGIONAL MEETINGS:

8.i Goulburn and North Eastern Region

The Executive Officer advised a regional meeting has been arranged in Shepparton on 24th June 1980 from 10.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. 24 Cooperatives in the region have been circulated with information on this regional meeting. Mr. Long indicated his availability to attend and chair the meeting in place of Mr. Rundle who expressed inability to be present on that day.

8.ii Mr. Rawlinson reported a regional meeting has been convened in Mildura for the Northern Mallee region on Tuesday, 15th July 1980 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. A Beechcraft 'plane has been chartered to convey Federation visitors from Melbourne leaving Melbourne 2 p.m. on 15th July returning to Melbourne about Midnight on the same day. The cost of the charter is \$495. Mr. Rundle and Mr. Slattery indicated their ability to attend the meeting. Twelve Cooperatives in the Region have been circulated with information of the meeting and the Cooperative Federation of South Australia has been advised with a view to interesting South Australian Cooperatives on that side of the border adjacent to Mildura in the meeting.

9. EDUCATION PROGRAMME:

The Executive Officer reported having completed arrangements for two Director Training programmes to be held in July and August under the control and supervision of Dr. Ian Wardrop, of the Caulfield Institute of Technology.

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The seminars are to be held at the Sheraton Hotel. Council recommended consideration be given to 10% discount for subscribers who contribute and participate in both seminars. Differential rates will be costed for Directors of member organisations and Directors of non-member organisations of the Federation.

Publicity has been given in the June Newsletter to be followed up by individual brochures to likely participating Cooperatives.

10. REPORTS:

10.i Cooperative Federation of Australia

The President reported on a meeting held with the President of the Cooperative Federation of Australia to discuss the proposal of the Cooperative Federation of Western Australia for a re-structured operation of the Cooperative Federation of Australia as proposed at the last meeting of Federal Council.

The written proposals from the West Australian Federation were tabled for discussion. These recommended a revision of the Federal Constitution to provide for:-

- (1) Direct membership from Cooperatives in addition to State Federations.
- (2) Members of the Cooperative Federation of Australia Council to be elected by membership.
- (3) The Cooperative Federation of Australia personnel, as necessary, enabled to contact members direct.
- (4) To recruit and locate in Canberra a professional Public Relations/Lobbyist for the purpose of implementing an action oriented National Body.
- (5) The administration and secretariat facilities to be provided by the joint venture agreement continuing between the Cooperative Federation of Australia and the Cooperative Federation of Victoria.

After a lengthy and detailed discussion Council agreed that the Resolution carried at its May 1978 meeting was still valid.

This resolution reads:-

"That this Federation adopt as its first priority the establishment of a strong and active Cooperative movement in Victoria serviced by full-time Executive Officer and that consistent with this primary policy the Federation continues to support the development of active Australian Federation".

Council agreed

that its representative members from the Council of the Cooperative Federation of Australia be instructed to negotiate and vote on this matter in accordance with the above Resolution.

10.ii

Cooperative Advisory Council

10.ii.i

Inspection of Trading Cooperatives

Mr. Long reported that discussions with the Registry indicated the present staffing situation precluded regular programmes of inspection of Trading and Producers' Cooperatives. Council agreed this indicates that the provisions of the Cooperation Act implying protection for members of Cooperatives are not being provided thereby leaving members of such Cooperatives subject to unnecessary risk.

Council agreed

that a submission should be made to the Registrar and, through him, to the Minister that staff provisions should be made to enable inspections of Trading and Producer Cooperatives, in addition to those already being inspected, to be made at least once in three years. Until such time as the staff position has been increased, close inspection of all annual reports of Cooperatives incorporated under the Cooperation Act should be made by the Registrar to ensure inspections are urgently undertaken when matters revealed in such annual reports indicate the situation merits such inspection. In addition, advice from the Cooperative Federation of Victoria on Cooperatives whose apparent situation indicates more detailed study should be accepted and inspections arranged.

In the event of such recommendation not being accepted by the Registry and the Department, The Cooperative Federation of Victoria should give further consideration to its proposals for the development of the statutory Cooperative audit programme under the auspices of the Cooperative Federation of Victoria.

10.ii.ii

Release from Confidentiality on Amendments to the Act

Mr. Long indicated he had not yet been granted release from the confidentiality imposed on the proposed amendments to the Act. In the meantime, one Cooperative, not affiliated with the Federation, has written direct to the Registry seeking an increase in the minimum dividend authorised to be paid on share capital.

Council agreed this can be done by regulation. Mr. Long indicated his intention of bringing the matter to the attention of the next meeting of the Advisory Council,

10.ii.iii Amendments to the Stamp Act

Mr. Long reported that the last meeting of the Cooperative Advisory Council was held the day after withdrawal of the clause of the Bill to amend the Stamps Act seeking to exclude Credit Unions and Building Societies from exemptions under the Stamps Act. He advised Council that indications are that the amendments could be re-introduced in a later session of the current Parliament. The basis of these proposed amendments are concerned with some areas of the activities of Cooperative financial institutions in their dealings with third parties.

10.iii Executive Officer

Mr. Rawlinson reported on Cooperatives visited since the last meeting which included the Wallace Dairy Cooperative currently the subject of a takeover offer by a non-Cooperative. He had attended the formation meeting of the West Meadows Trading Cooperative and a meeting organised by the Doncaster Templestowe Council relating to the foundation of Work Cooperatives. He had also had informal discussions with the Edenhope Cooperative on the possibility of providing assistance in attempting to find a buyer for that Cooperative store. Formal request in this matter is awaited. He had had discussions with Mr. Griffiths and supplied material on the project relating to the preparation of a Cooperative booklet being organised by the Victorian Employment Committee. Advisory services had also been provided to other Cooperatives.

11. 1980 ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

Council agreed

that the 1980 Annual Conference should be held in the same venue as the 1979 Conference at about the same time in the month of October 1980.

The Executive Officer was instructed to prepare a proposed programme for consideration at the next meeting of Council.

12. PLANNING COMMITTEE:

The Council adopted the recommendations of the Planning Committee which met from 9 a.m to 2.30 p.m. on Sunday, 8th June 1980 to consider future programmes for the operation of the Cooperative Federation of Victoria.

13. CHANGE OF OFFICE LOCATION:

Subsequent to the expansion of Security Cooperative Permanent Building Society the office of the Cooperative Federation of Victoria is changed to:-

225 Swanston Street,
MELBOURNE.

Telephone number 663 1674.

Effective from 10th June 1980.

The rent charged will continue at the same figure, viz. \$1,000 per annum.

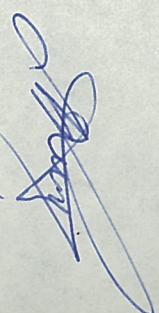
14. NEXT MEETING:

It was agreed

the next meeting of Council of The Cooperative Federation of Victoria would be held on Monday, 21st July 1980, commencing 7 p.m.

15. CLOSURE:

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 6 p.m.


21/7/80